

A *W. C. C.*
S E R M O N

Preached on *Janu*ary the 1st. 1681.

In the NEW CHURCH at
Port-Royal *W. C. C.*

I N
J A M A I C A,

Being the first time of performing
Divine Service there.

Published at the Request of Sir *Henry Morgan*,
and other Gentlemen, by whose Liberal Con-
tribution the said Church was Erected.

By J. L. LL. B.

L O N D O N:

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SEERMON

PREACHED BY THE REV. J. H. BROWN

IN THE NEW CHURCH

ON SUNDAY MORNING

AT THE NEW CHURCH

AT THE NEW CHURCH

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To the Right Honourable

Sir *HENRY MORGAN*, Kt.
Lieutenant-Governor and Com-
mander in Chief of this his Ma-
jesty of *Great Britain's* Island of
JAMAICA, &c.

May it please your Honour,

M*Any men (I doubt not) may be so pitiful as to blush for my Impudence, when I shall appear in England like a wild Indian ; others perhaps may hope I have so much modesty left as to frame excuses for my self, either by laying the blame on the Importunity of Friends, (the usual Refuge of Scriblers) which has exposed my weakness to publick view ; or on the want of a Wardrobe, (a Library) which should have furnish'd me with a decent Dress : Though these pretences might be useful to me, yet since Truth is not uncomely, when it appears in the*

The Epistle Dedicatory.

same manner, I shall not seek Protection for my Credit from such Fig-leaves, whilst your Honour gives me better Security: Under this assurance I am bold to vindicate my Obedience to your Honours pleasure, (and the joynt desires of other Gentlemen my Candid Auditors) which with me has the force of an Inviolable Law: Nay I should have been guilty of great Injustice, in omitting any opportunity of publishing to the World, how great a Patron of the Orthodox Religion we have in Jamaica; upon which account, I may hope for a more favourable Censure of my own weakness. You need not (Sir) fear my running into a Flattering Panegyrick, *Tantum abest à specie, quantum abest à necessitate*; but Gratitude obliges me to acquaint my Country-men how I bless Providence, which by the Noble, Learned, and Good Lord Bishop of London, introduced me into the Free Service of Those who in many respects, are alike qualified; To him I owe the use of the old Stratagem, to look for the Rising Sun in the West, where with pleasure of mind (which is an Empire) I view the Rays of Majesty by Reflection; in due Execution of Laws; in Decency and Order, in Ecclesiastical, Civil, and Military affairs; Encouragement of Trade; mutual love amongst Loyal Subjects, and all that constitutes a Happy Government: so that no one, who is not an Enemy to himself, can think

The Epistle Dedicatory.

think a warm Climate to be out of God's blessing. This Harmony has made you devise Liberal things, being more powerful and attractive, than Amphion's Harp in raising these Noble Walls, whilst your Honours vigilant Eye (like Boaz over the Reapers) has made the Workmens Labour a pleasure.

The ensuing Discourse upon our entrance into God's Service herein, I hope cannot be misconstrued, as a doubting, or anticipating of my Lord of London's kindness, which he has now conferred on the Place, by granting a Publick and Solemn Dedication, as the first Blessing and Honour of that nature, which the English ever enjoyed in these parts. And that we may never want the Influence of his Favour, at so great a distance, I assure my self your Honour will be always ready to establish Ecclesiastical Discipline, so far as may be, for the suppressing of Vice, which is a truer Object of Fortitude, then some of our Neighbours who flee when no man pursueth. Sir, I know Righteousness creates the boldness of a Lion, and will make you both an Ornament and Safeguard to this Place, in opposing the Rudeness of such as dare bark, or hiss, at any thing which is Divine: Your Authority will drive Antiochus's Beasts not only from the Sanctuary, but the very Doors of it; and your Sword in some sort represent
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The Epistle Dedicatory.

the Flaming Cherubs, in guarding, but not keeping men from, Religion, which is the Tree of Life : In the Fruits whereof (as they contain present and future blessings) that your Honour and Family, may have an ample share, is the hearty Prayer of,

Sir,

Your most Obedient,

Port-Royal
in Jamaica,
Jan. 28. 1687.

and Dutiful Servant,

J. L.

ACT.

ACT. 7. 33.

Put off thy shooes from thy feet, for the place where thou standest is Holy Ground.

THough we may truly say, with the *Psalmist*, we bring our years to an end as a Tale that is told; all the Scenes of our life being full of *Vanity*, and as ridiculous as that Actor in *Smyrna*, whose hand contradicted his tongue calling upon Heaven; though our Talk hath been sometimes of things above, whilst our Actions have been degenerous and rivetted to the things below, and our best performances sullied with some spots of Imperfection: Yet I hope we shall not always retain so much of the Serpent, as to be Emblems of the year, still turning into our selves, and the same method of living; but be renewed in the Spirit of our minds, redeeming the time by casting off, not only the Old Skin, but the Old Man, and all Clogs which may hinder us from running the Race set before us, even the smooth way of Righteousness. So may we take off the Imputation of
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of those, who deride our Devotions, and publick Conventions, as if they were stifled with Superstition, in the observance of Time or Place, in reference to God or Goodness, without a Divine Precept. To which end let this time of our Saviour's being made subject to the Law by Circumcision mind us, That he designed thereby to spiritualize it, and not make us Libertines, but that our Actions should be on Nobler Principles, that we might through his Grace become sincerely, though not perfectly Righteous; so may all our Gifts become acceptable, though not meritorious: He whose the Earth is, and the fullness thereof, will allow Man the honour of being in some sort a Benefactor to him, and will repay him with sufficient Interest: By taking heed to our feet when we enter this Place, we may bespeak his peculiar Presence, and Benediction: This days assembling together may be assuredly Auspicious, if our Spiritual *Renovalia* commence from the same time; If we harbour nothing unworthy of Christianity in our breasts, nor make the Temples of the Holy Ghost, Sanctuaries for Vice or Uncleaness, we may find the same favour from God in a standing Temple, as our

Fathers

Fathers did in the Tabernacle of Testimony, where God communicates his Will, and makes known his Pleasure, where by his own appointment his Name is recorded, and commemorated by his Servants, his acts of Mercy praised and magnified, where he evidences his presence, to accept the Offerings and bless the Persons of those who resort thither.

Now to justify not only the lawfulness, but commendableness of Erecting such Places of Devotion, and to shew what Reverence is due therein, I have chosen God's own words to *Moses*, as they are made a part of St. *Stephen's* Historical Argument to prove the approaching destruction of the *Temple*, by shewing the unworthiness and great provocation of the *Jews*, who therefore had no reason to expect a continuance of his Favour: And this I have the rather pitch'd on, because of some part of his speech, v. 48, 49, 50. so grossly mistaken and urged by those Zealots who would have all our Churches thought Superstitious, or at least all expences about them Superfluous, Cost and Magnificence not becoming the simplicity of the Gospel: As if a Manger were still as fit for a Glorified Saviour, as a Throne, and they becoming like the Beasts that perish,

the only fit Company for him : The reason perhaps why so many of God's Houses were turned into real Stables, and Dens of Thieves : But I hope none of their Survivors are come hither also ; nor can I fear St. Stephen's Fate, to be gnashed on with the Teeth from the severity of that truth, which now is seasonable to be spoken.

And so with Reverence I come to the words of God, which are a Command of shewing a respect to the Place of his Presence, manifested by a glorious appearance in the *Bush*, and is therefore called *Holy*. From which without running into many particulars, *Three Observables* arise :

1. A distinction of *Places*.
2. The reason of the distinction, (*viz.*) God's peculiar Residence, and dispensation of his Grace.
3. The Inference thereupon ; a suitable Respect and Reverence.

1. We must learn to distinguish between Sacred and Prophane *Places*, the omission and neglect whereof made *God* express his anger by the mouth of *Ezekiel*, chap. 22. vers. 26. Though he be not a local *God*, of the Hills or of the Valleys, his Presence not to be circumscrib'd,

scrib'd, yet his condescension is so great to the Sons of Men, that he delights to be in the midst of them in publick Places of Audience, when they present their Addresses to him; *Adam* in his short time of Innocence, knew where to meet him with a pleasing Aspect, when he had no occasion to palliate his Crime, or hide himself; his Sons knew where to offer their Sacrifice. From whence should we trace History to the Purest times of Christianity, it would in one continued Series strongly justify the same Practice, and confirm our present Assertion: This Observable only we will not omit, (*viz.*) That when the Passion was represented to *Abraham* on Mount *Moriah*, the Conception to *Moses* on Mount *Sinai*, the Intercession of Christ to *David* in the Threshing-floor of *Araunah*, two of which places were appointed for the Temple, and Tabernacle, there was enjoyned a distinction of Persons in respect of the Places, proportionable in some sort, to that difference between Persons and Places, in the Temple and Tabernacle: *Abraham* and his Son may go yonder, but the People must stay here; *Moses* and *Joshua* must pull off their shoes, and shew Reverence, till they were impower'd to execute the Priest-

hood; David's Altar was erected only near the place of the Angels appearance: The direction in which behalf was universal, Persons, Garments, Sacrifices, Ornaments had their distinctions; the Tabernacle was Holier then the Camp, and the same Order lived in the Temple. Solomon and Ezra had patterns to be directed by, and how zealous the Jews were in the observance of them, is sufficiently manifested by their Resentment of Pompey's insolent Invasion of the Sanctuary, which he termed, *Grande Impie Gentis arcanum*, though to his own ruine, as their Story supposes. Herod (though guided only by Ambition) would not expose the View of it to unqualified Persons, as may appear by the severe sentence inscribed over the Gates, against all Rude Intruders: And shall there now less Honour be given to God, less Holiness in the Place of his Worship, since his only Son was really Sacrificed, then when he was offered only in Shadow? when our Saviour in a Holy Rage (after his Baptism, and before his Passion) expelled the Merchants and Usurers from the place where the Christian Church was best represented, where Instructions and Devotions were to be performed after his Expiration,

piration, he shewed hereby that this *distinction of Places* should be of equal extent, with the benefit of his Baptism and Passion; should continue as long as the necessity of Prayer and Preaching the Gospel, licensing all Fa-bricks erected for the same use by his own, and his Apostles examples, who disputed, instructed, and prayed in smaller Synagogues, which succeeding Ages have warrantably imitated.

How hot the Zeal of Christians was in this affair, appeared by their erecting Oratories, as soon as they durst creep out of their Caves and Dens: what was the care and cost of the good and great *Constantine*, few are unacquainted with: *Justinian's* pious Emulation, one's equalling the Letters of the *Roman Alphabet*, another the days of the year with the number of their own Churches, a small part of History will inform us. And though what was so well intended, was soon corrupted, and many Fopperies introduced, yet the abuse must not wholly frustrate the end: The Ancients we know condemned the opinion of Merit, feigned Miracles, superstition of Reliques and Saints; yet they applauded the Essential part of the work, and the Founders,
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acknowledging our Saviour's approbation of the *Centurion's* character, to be sufficient Authority for their imitation of him : However since decency and order never want disturbers, and there are such as look on the erecting convenient *Places* for God's Service, as Superstitious, (though he expressly appropriates a House of Prayer to himself ;) it may not be improper to examine the strength of their most cogent Arguments.

As to the practice of the *Patriarchs* which they urge, what parity is there between their case and ours ; were not their Habitations movable, their Congregations their own Families, so that fixed places for Divine Worship was not suitable to their condition ; yet conveniences they had, and in such case *Daniel's Den*, or *Jonas* his floating Island supply the place of a Church, so Devotion do but consecrate it.

What is fetched from *Isaiah*, where God says Heaven is his Throne, and Earth his Footstool, asking where is the House they would attempt to build him ; they fortifie with the 48th verse of this Chapter, *God dwelleth not in Temples made with hands* ; which Texts speak this sence only, That God who is Incom-

comprehensible, will not be thought to be imprisoned like the Heathen Idols, or chained like the *Tyrrians* Titular Deity, but he disowns not such a place where a Congregation might joyfully meet together to the honour of his Name. Thus St. Stephen tells the *Jews*, that God who had the whole World for his Palace, was not to be confined to their Temple, so as to preserve it from ever being destroyed, since they were grown *Rebellious*, and had been guilty of shedding the blood of the Lord of Life.

From our Saviour's discourse with the Woman of *Samaria*, and the Apostles Injunction that men *pray every where lifting up pure hands, without wrath and doubting*, I can infer only this; God's Worship under the Gospel, shall not be confined to the Mountain, or Temple at *Jerusalem*; which Christian Liberty I think would have been improperly so called, did it forbid erecting other places convenient for that Devotion which Christianity requires.

Though Types cease, yet the Temple was not meerly Mystical in the use of it, but had a natural convenience for the multitude of those that kept Holyday; why therefore may not our Churches multiply, where the Gospel is spread,

spread, as well as the Lords-day succeed the Sabbath, Time and Place convenient being always necessary for Sacred Actions.

It is therefore your Glory who have been as forward to build God a House, as the warrant is uncontroulable : and if the *Shunamites* kindness to a Prophet, in building and furnishing a Chamber, be kindly accepted of God, what Favourites shall they be, who (like the *man after his own heart*) delight not in their own Houses, till God's be finished. *David* indeed was not permitted to build the Temple, not barely (I suppose) as a Warriour, but because he was a man of blood in the matter of *Uriah* ; for the *Centurion* was a Souldier too : And I hope Ecclesiastical and Military Discipline duly observed, will be mutual Supports to each other, uniting Strength and the beauty of Holiness. To *David's* Harp therefore let our Souls be tuned ; let us rejoyce with him who was glad, when they said, *We will go into the House of the Lord*, which he appropriates to himself and makes Holy, by a peculiar making of his residence, and affording his Graces there. --- The second thing to be spoken to ;

2. There is supposed in every ordinary Consecration, whether of Persons, Things, or Places,

Places, a delivery made by Man, taking possession by God, who does it not by Proxy, but is immediately and personally present: Where he assumes or reserves any thing, or Place to himself, his presence constitutes and makes an extraordinary Consecration, which presence follows in the Ordinary; thus when *Jacob* saw that intercourse between Heaven and Earth, he concluded that the Lord was in that Place, and the Heavenly Messengers ready to convey the Petitions of humble Penitents into his Presence-Chamber. Whereupon *Luz* changes its name and property, that in *Bethel* (i. e. the House of God) his Vows may be performed. Thus the Divine appearance to *David*, *Moses*, and *Joshua*, made the places Holy by his own appointment: From whence I presume may arise *St. Peter's* forwardness in building three Tabernacles at the Transfiguration: The imitation of whose Zeal in the other ordinary way, will not (I hope) be look'd on by Posterity as a Frantick act of yours, as if you wist not what you did.

In the forementioned Examples, God's preceding Presence made *Places* Holy; in the ordinary Consecration which now concerns us, God makes them so, by his gracious accep-

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tance, and a more immediate communication of himself therein. From hence *Cain* called the place of his Father and Families Devotion, the *face of God* ; and *Abel* had a signal Testimony of his Presence, by firing of his Sacrifice.

Thus God took possession of the Tabernacle of the Temple, when dedicated to his Service ; he was with *Abraham* and *Jacob* by promise, with *Moses* and *Joshua* by assistance. The Lord of *Israel* can accompany his Servants in all Places ; but they are most sure to find him where he has put his Glory, and in a more especial manner placed his Name, which in the Law is *Domus Mansionalis Omnipotentis Dei*. Our Saviour honoured the Anniversary of the third Dedication, under the *Maccabees*, with his Presence ; which Solemnity was afterwards used by *Eugenius* first, who was followed by other Christians, as may appear by Ecclesiastical History, many approving of the Custom. From whence the Canonists conclude it to be a necessary Church-Constitution, which none inferiour to a Bishop could perform, according to the Law definition, *Res sacræ sunt quæ per Pontifices ritè consecratæ sunt* ; though some would give the power of Consecration to Princes and Governours, or at least

least of deputing others to do the same. Thus they say *Solomon* bore a great part in the Consecration of the Temple; and *Constantine* himself called that great number of Clergy to his Church at *Jerusalem*; nay an *Helvetian* Professor says, *Antiquitus hæc Authoritas semper fuit Magistratus Politici*: But with what Authority he speaks, I understand not; nor shall I thereupon undertake to dispute Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, rather hoping that Necessity, being our Advocate, will easily excuse the want of that Formality we desire, since we perform the Essential part by a Pious Intention. *Peter Martyr* distinguishing between an Inward Temple, and an Outward, meaning by an Inward, *Man*, by the Outward, a *Place of Worship*, says, That we consecrate a Place, when first we apply it to Sacred Uses; as *Man* is dedicated to God in Baptism: From whom we dissent not, since he further agrees with the Ancient manner, according to the Registry of *Eusebius*, concerning the performance at *Jerusalem*; where they adorned their first Assembling in the Church, with Praying, Praising, Thanksgiving, and Preaching: Nay a Jesuit and great Metaphysician confesses, That by simple Intention of Will and plain Benediction,

on, an Oratory or Church may be separated from Prophane or Common Uses. So that though we cannot use all customary Ceremonies, I shall not fear the Accusation of a *Romanist* against *Æschardus*, as if by some omission he had rather Prophane'd, than Consecrated a Church: I shall not think my self bound to make any Apology for Administering the Sacrament in a place no otherwise Consecrated, as *Athanasius* did when accused by the *Arians* for so doing; If there be any Error in Scituation, or Church-Architecture, (which the great Cardinal so much stands on) I will not invoke St. *Dunstan's* Shoulder to remove any part of it into its proper place: We may dislodge Satan without Exorcisms, who will flee if we resist him; nor need we any Miracles either to allow or disapprove of our Free-will-offering, since every Creature of God is sanctified by the Word and Prayer. This in former times was sufficient to procure a Reverential behaviour in such Places, not from any inherent Holiness in them, but that which was and is objectively adherent to them, through Christ's promises, by united Devotions, and participating of the Sacraments, is a Communion of Saints. And O that we were
joyntly

joyntly resolved to fulfil the Prophecy of the Church, which is in our own power to do ; Many people shall say, let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths : For out of Sion shall the Lord go forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. In his House therefore let us meet him, where he is to be found, with an early and humble Devotion, and when we appear in his Church, let not the neglect of our Duty there, prove greater than Absence ; which brings us to the last thing.

3. The necessity of a suitable Respect to the Place where God's honour dwelleth, which suitability betwixt Honour and Merit is required by natural Justice.

This Eastern custom of pulling off the shoes, would aptly lead us to a view of the several Reverential behaviours practiced in our own Church, in all which we pay but one Divine one, and that is to God : But I shall not at present trouble you with Circumstantial, a word or two of the most Essential parts of our deportment, shall set you all at liberty.

There is in the first place supposed an awful

ful coming to the Place where Reverence is required ; for in the words to *Moses*, (*draw not nigh hither*, which *St. Stephen* omits) there is no excuse afforded for our neglect, God thereby only forbidding an impudent Intrusion into the *Sanctum*, an entrance into Ministerial Offices without Commission ; but to his House all are bidden, and the slighting of the invitation would be a high contempt : If only the Command of his *Vicegerent* were to be produced in this affair, since *Via Regia*, is *quasi Sacra*, that contempt is so unwarrantable, that I wonder how Absenters can pretend to Conscience, which is the strongest Sanction of the Law, obliges us to Obedience, and bids us not rob God of the least of his Retinue unnecessarily.

Having made our entrance into the House of God, the wise man says we cannot be too attentive ; when God speaks and pronounces our welcom, let no Prejudice or Partiality, no affection for a Party, make *Paul* and *Apollo's* the heads of Faction, which is in effect the dividing of Christ himself.

Let not his positive Laws of Baptism, and his Supper, be so much slighted as they now seem to be ; but what is most of all suitable

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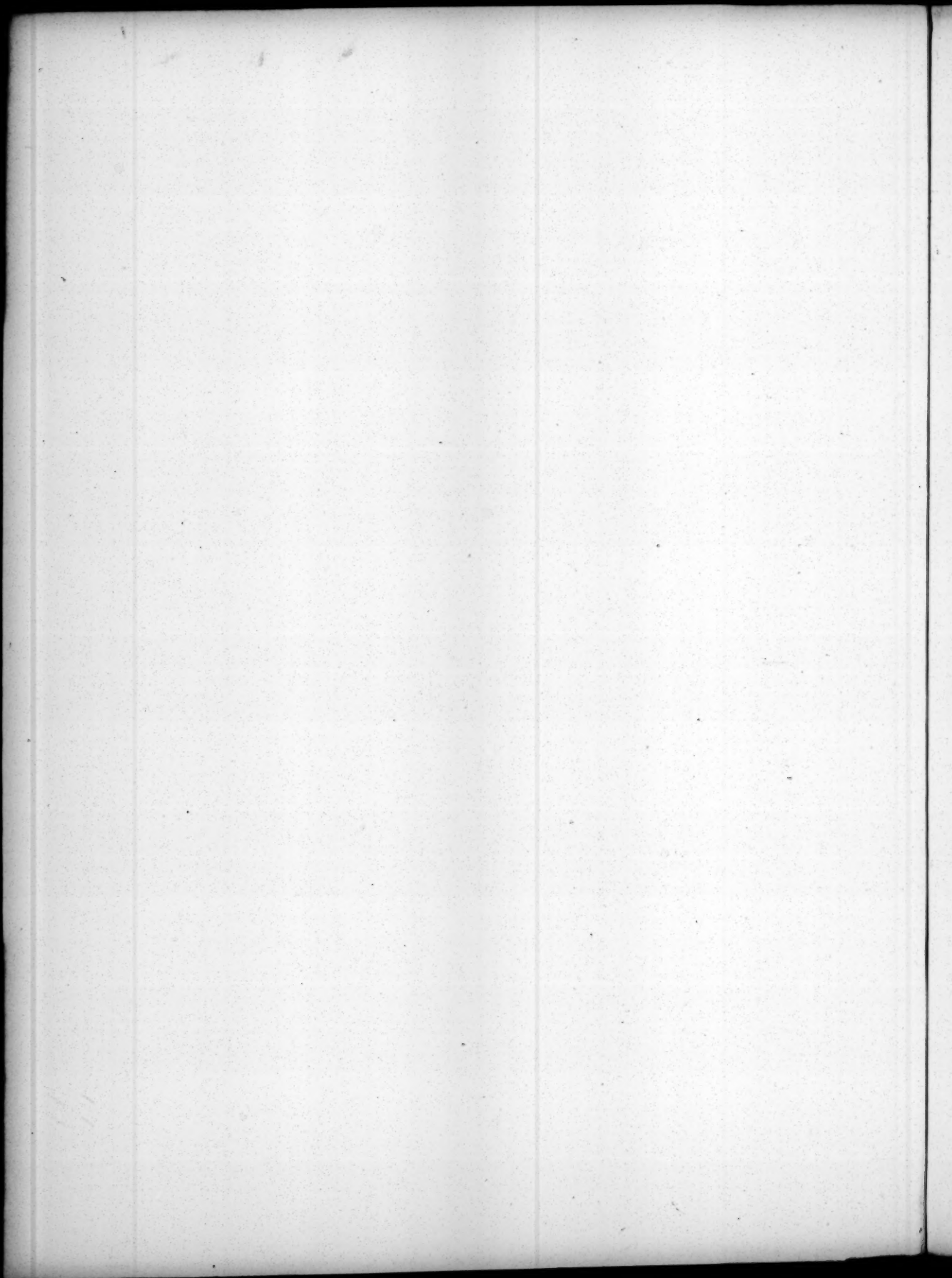
to the present occasion, let our first Assembling together be seasoned with *Praises* and *Prayers*, the chief Ingredients requisite for a true *Consecration*.

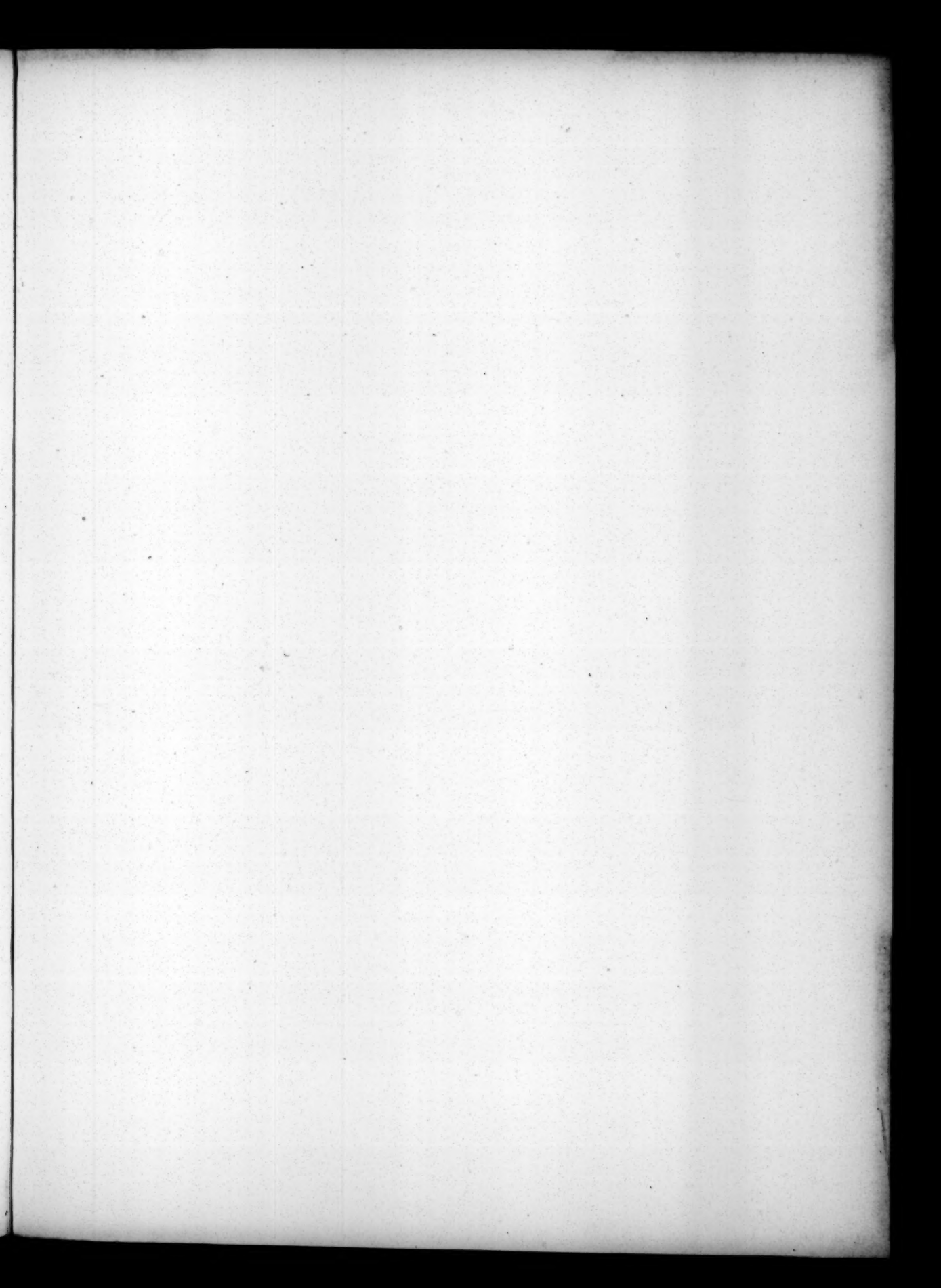
1. Under the first head, This Noble Structure seems to speak the Language of the Son of *Syrack*, and bids us praise famous men, whose modesty perhaps would not bear the Truth in the rehearsal of their Liberal Acts; and such a Flattering Orator might well expect the same Fate which attended *Constantines*, (*viz.*) to be silenced for too much commending him on the same occasion: However we are obliged to praise God for raising such Benefactors, for giving of us Nursing-Fathers and Defenders of Religion; not only Martyrs and Confessors, but such as dare live, and do, as well as suffer, for the promotion of the *Gospel*: That we are not confined to Caves and Dens, which more refined Christianity was contented with: That he hath given us all blessings Spiritual and Temporal in his Son, the conformity to whose Example will be the praising of him in the highest Key.

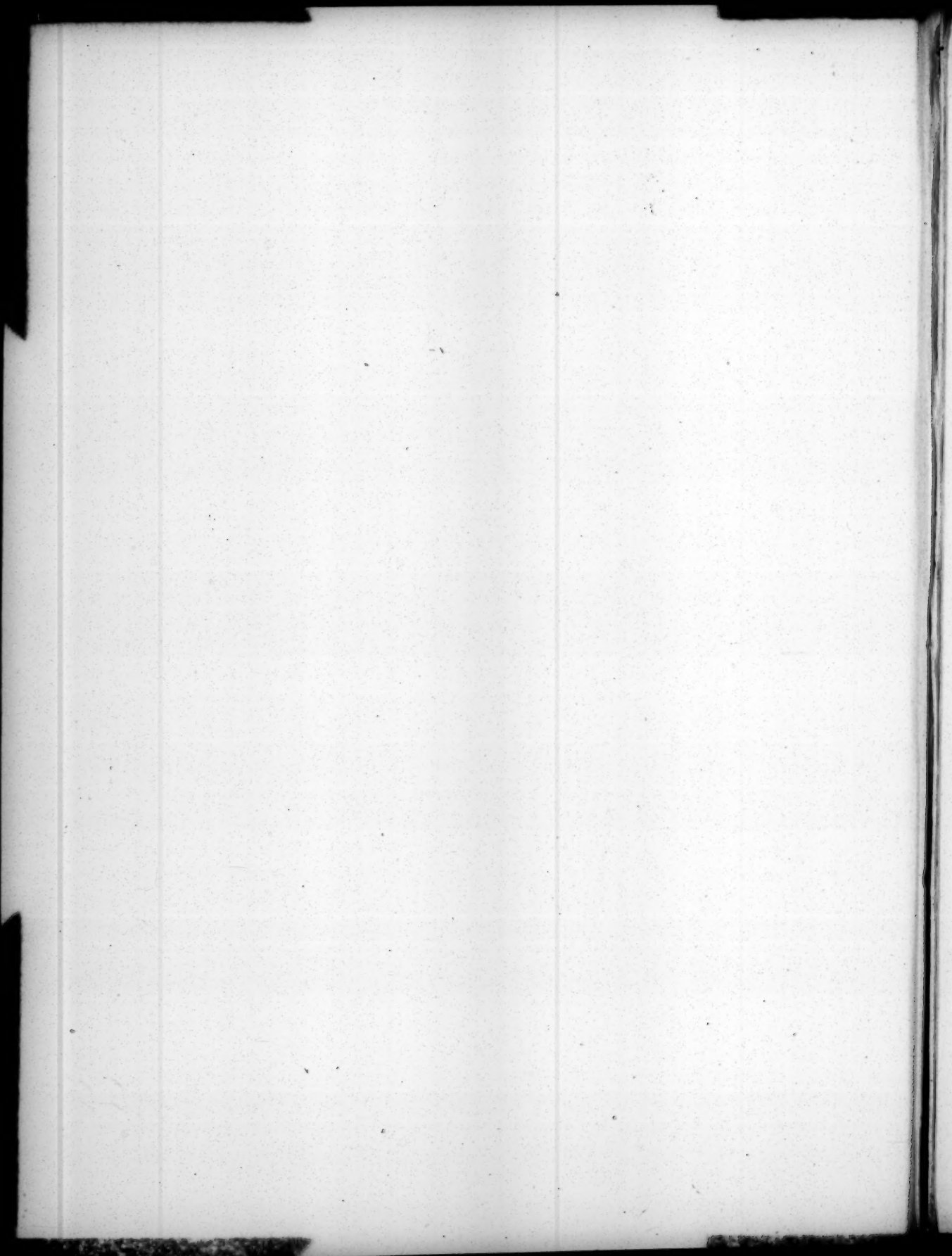
2. Then let us pray for the continuance of all his Mercies, that our Candlestick may not be

be removed, that the devices of Foreign and Domestick Enemies may be frustrated, that all Heresie, Schism, Faction and Rebellion may be restrained by the men of Courage, to whom Authority is committed; that we may be as a City compact together, even all who profess the Name of Christ, the Harmony of the Gospel being powerful to unite our hearts and minds so, that the Cross may be still more and more Triumphant, till thou O blessed Saviour hast obtained the Heathen for thine Inheritance, and the utmost parts of the Earth for thy Possession: To whom with the Father and blessed Spirit, be ascribed (as is most due) all Honour and Glory, from this time for evermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.







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